

CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-17 Canceled.

18. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising the coding region of SEQ ID NO:1.

19. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising the complement of DNA capable of hybridizing under moderately stringent conditions to the DNA of SEQ ID NO:1 wherein the moderately stringent condition include 50% formamide and 6XSSC, at 42°C with washing conditions of 60°C, 0.5XSSC, 0.1% SDS, and, wherein the DNA encodes a polypeptide that is a cofactor in IL-18 binding.

20. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a polypeptide, wherein said polypeptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 80% identical to an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:2.

21. (New) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a DNA encoding a polypeptide comprising the amino acids of SEQ ID NO:2.

22. (New) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a DNA encoding a polypeptide, wherein said polypeptide comprises an amino acid sequence that is at least 80% identical to amino acids x₁ to 356 of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein x₁ is amino acid 1 or 15.

23. (New) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a DNA encoding a soluble polypeptide comprising amino acids x₁ to 356 of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein x₁ is amino acid 1 or 15.

24. (New) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a DNA that encodes a polypeptide comprising a fragment of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein the fragment is a cofactor in IL-18 binding.

25. (New) An isolated nucleic acid comprising DNA that encodes a polypeptide comprising a fragment that is at least 80% identical to SEQ ID NO:2, wherein the fragment is a cofactor in IL-18 binding.

26. (New) An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid selected from the group consisting of

(a) SEQ ID NO:2.

(b) fragments of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein the fragment is a cofactor in IL-18 binding.

27. (New) A isolated polypeptide comprising a polypeptide encoded by DNA selected from the group consisting of:
- (a) the coding region of SEQ ID NO:1;
 - (b) the complement of DNA capable of hybridizing under moderately stringent conditions to the DNA of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the moderately stringent condition include 50% formamide and 6XSSC, at 42°C with washing conditions of 60°C, 0.5XSSC, 0.1% SDS, and, wherein the DNA encodes a polypeptide that is a cofactor in IL-18 binding; and
 - (c) DNA that is degenerate to the DNA of SEQ ID NO:1.
28. (New) An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 80% identical to a sequence selected from the group consisting of:
- (a) amino acids x₁ to 356 of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein x₁ is amino acid 1 or 15; and
 - (b) fragments of SEQ ID NO:2 wherein the fragment is a cofactor in IL-18 binding.
29. (New) A polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:
- (a) amino acids x₁ to 356 of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein x₁ is amino acid 1 or 15; and
 - (b) fragments of SEQ ID NO:2 wherein the fragment is a cofactor in IL-18 binding.
30. (New) A fusion protein comprising the Fc region of Ig a polypeptide selected from the group consisting of:
- (a) amino acids x₁ to 356 of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein x₁ is amino acid 1 or 15; and
 - (b) a fragment of (a), wherein the fragment is a cofactor in IL-18 binding.
 - (c) A polypeptide that is at least 80% identical to (a), wherein the polypeptide is a cofactor in IL-18 binding.
31. (New) A recombinant expression vector comprising a DNA selected from the group consisting of:
- (a) the coding region of SEQ ID NO:1;
 - (b) a DNA encoding amino acids x₁ to 356 of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein x₁ is amino acid 1 or 15; and
 - (c) a DNA encoding an polypeptide that is at least 80% identical to the polypeptide of (b).
32. (New) A process for preparing a polypeptide, the process comprising culturing a host cell transformed with an expression vector of claim 31 under conditions that promote expression of the polypeptide.
33. (New) A host cell transformed or transfected with an expression vector according to claim 32.

Appl. No. --to be assigned--

Preliminary Amendment dated December 15, 2003

34. (New) An antibody that is immunoreactive with a polypeptide of claim 26.